

**REMARKS**

**INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 3 and 4 have been amended. Claim 2 has been cancelled. Claims 1 and 3-15 are pending in the application. No new matter has been added.

**CLAIM AMENDMENTS**

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the plate member is divided into a plurality of plate segments, and the fastening means comprise connecting members for connecting adjacent ones of the plate segments and having adjustors for adjusting gaps between the adjacent ones of the plate segments. Support for this amendment may be found in at least original claim 2. It is respectfully submitted that the previously cited references, namely Wilkinson (U.S. Patent No. 2,338,154) and Schwraz (DE 196 04 643), do not disclose this feature of amended claim 1. Claims 3 and 4 have been amended to improve the form of the claims.

**CONCLUSION**

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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